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CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

They
Met
the
Savior

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TRANSFORMED LIVES



THE COMMUNICATING GOD

by General Superintendent John A. Knight

Our times have been called "The age of communication." But God has been communicating to man since the beginning of time. He is the *great communicator* and uses all means to make himself known.

In nature His voice is heard by those who have ears to hear: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1). When He walked through the garden calling to Adam, "Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9), His purpose was to communicate himself. He communicated His will to Abram and promised to bless his seed (Genesis 12:1-3). In the thunder of Mount Sinai God communicated His law to Moses and the Hebrew children (Exodus 19—20). Throughout the Old Testament era God spoke through the prophets and judges to His people.

Supremely, however, God has spoken through His Son: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). He continues to communicate to mankind by the written word of Holy Scripture and through His church through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

God is not without a witness anywhere. John made this clear with his immortal declaration that Christ is the "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). In some form, through some means, God speaks to every man. The key to understanding that message is the revelation found in Jesus, "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9, NKJV) and by Him we have access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18).

The marvelous thing about God's revelation is that He makes himself known to us *personally*. Through the power of the Spirit God reveals himself to all who will receive Him. He appeared to Saul on the Damascus Road and made him to become the incomparable apostle Paul. To Augustine, the licentious young man who had fled from his mother's God and ignored her prayers, He appeared in a garden and transformed his life. Augustine became the great theologian and bishop of Hippo.

To Martin Luther, preparing a lecture on theology at the

University of Wittenburg, God appeared. Luther saw the light of salvation in the words of Scripture: "Therein [in the gospel] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: . . . The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). Luther became the central leader of the Protestant Reformation. To John Wesley one evening in a prayer meeting God appeared through words of Paul in Romans, causing Wesley to exclaim: "I felt my heart strangely warmed." He became the catalyst for the great awakening in Britain, and through his leadership the Methodist church was born.

Indeed, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Age, background, race, sex make no difference to God. He seeks to communicate with every man, woman, boy, and girl.

I remember when He first spoke to me. It was in Wichita Falls, Tex., in a zone rally. Dr. A. S. London, noted lay Sunday School preacher and teacher, was the speaker. When he finished he asked if anyone wanted to become a Christian. I did. As a four-year-old boy I made my way to the altar. The people gathered around me and prayed like I was important. God, for Christ's sake, came into my heart that day. Later during my teen years following the full consecration of my life to Him, and through faith in His promise, He sanctified me *wholly*.

These epochal appearances of God to me have shaped the direction of my life, given me a purpose for which to live, and a sense of fulfillment and joy that has increased as the years have come and gone. I have discovered that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).

If your life is empty, your direction uncertain, your sins overwhelming, your spirit bitter and insensitive, and your mind confused, I recommend to you Jesus Christ, the world's only Savior. By His Spirit He will communicate with you today. Turn to His Word, seek out a friend for counsel and guidance, open your life to Him, worship with His people.

His name is *Jesus*—"For he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). As He communicates with you, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). I have found it so. □



HERALD of HOLINESS

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I was converted on July 11, 1970, in the Church of the Nazarene at Redondo Beach, Calif. That Sunday night, Pastor Melvin James was preaching.

I never had been in a preaching service until the Sunday before I was converted. My only exposure to Christianity as a child was two visits to Sunday School with a cousin.

No one ever shared the gospel with me. I knew zero about Jesus Christ before my conversion. I was 21 years old before I heard the gospel! I went to the church then because I was searching. I had been caught up in the turbulence of the 60s and 70s in America, when values, morals, ethics, and religion were radically questioned. Marches, causes, drugs, and the sexual revolution took America by storm. I graduated from high school in 1967 amid this chaos.

I came from a non-Christian, middle-class, blue-collar family. In high school, I was a three-year varsity letterman in cross-country and track. In my sophomore year, I won league champion in cross-country. Things were going great, but during my junior year I became heavily involved in the party life-style, though I continued to run cross-country and track.

During my senior year I started to mix drinking with drugs. By the end of that year I was using heavy drugs like LSD, speed, and cocaine.

After graduation from high school, I got a job with an aerospace firm called T.R.W. Because of my grade average (C-), I decided against college. My high school counselor did not think I could hack college. Some months later, I moved into an apartment in Manhattan Beach, Calif. The apartment was within 50 yards of the beach, which can be a wild environment for a single guy. During this time I was taking LSD, speed, pills, marijuana, and so forth, almost every day.

A turning point came in the summer of 1969. I started to sell drugs. I also got involved with a new crowd of people. They were criminals. They could put you in touch with those who would kill somebody if you wanted it done. Around June 1969 I was busted for possession of drugs.

When I got out of jail, I experimented for the first and last time with heroin. A friend brought over a guy he knew. I injected 3 c.c. into my arm and nothing happened, so this guy hit me up with another 3 c.c. I immediately rushed. This was enough heroin to kill me. I became deathly sick and vomited for hours; that saved me. I never tried heroin again.

During this time, I became deeply depressed. My favorite song was "Spinning Wheels," as sung by Blood, Sweat, and Tears. The spinning wheel is life that just keeps turning. People come, people go. People are born and people die. One part of the song became an obsession:

And when I die, there will be one less child in this world, and the world will carry on.

I was feeling and thinking about death all the time.

At this same time, T.R.W. began laying off employees. Cutbacks in the aerospace industry cost me my job. So through a combination of events, changes, and stresses, my life was spiraling downward, out of control. One Sunday, some of us were drinking and doing drugs. I had taken LSD earlier in the day, and by eve-

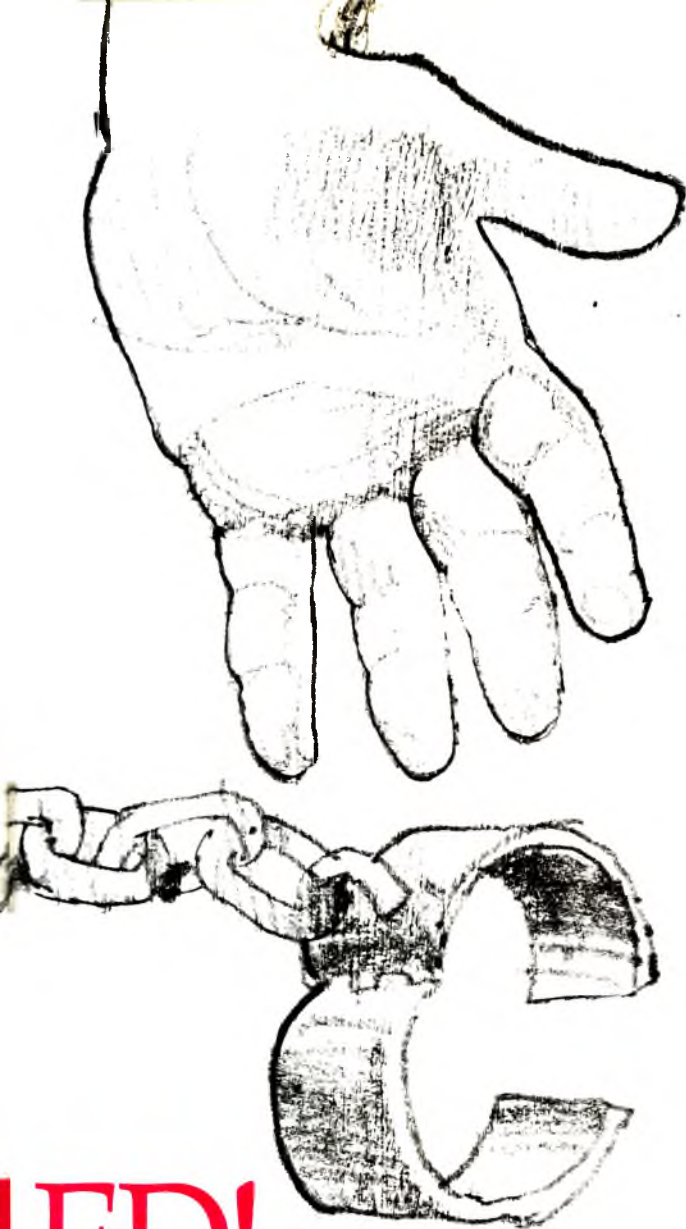


UNSHACK

ning I had taken a number of pills and smoked a couple of joints of marijuana. We decided to go to a dance place. I was trying to hit on a girl and ended up in a big hassle. I left with my roommate, Daren, for our apartment. Arriving there, I let Daren out and said, "I'll see you at my funeral."

Well, Daren was so high that my remark didn't register with him. He got out and I drove up Palos Verdes along the coast road. The longer I drove the more I felt death calling. Suddenly I thought, *This is it*, and jerked the steering wheel to the right, heading for the edge of the cliff. All I could think of was death. The headlights were shining into the darkness of death, as though guiding me to my coffin. Fortunately my car stopped about 10 feet from the edge of the cliff, where I would have plummeted to my death 400 feet below.

I was a heavy drug user, but I was still in good shape. I ran 17 miles back to my apartment. All the way I was trying to talk with God, to reach out to God, but I didn't know how. Back at the apartment I took 10 more pills, opened a can of beer, and wrote my last words to my parents. I asked God to forgive me, but I didn't



LED!

by
GEORGE S. HALLIWELL

want to live. The last thing I remember, after praying, was stumbling down the hall, waking up Daren and telling him what I was doing. Then I passed out. Twelve hours later, I regained consciousness in a hospital bed.

I didn't die because God answered my prayers, even though I didn't know God. I was trying to reach Him, and He spared my life.

For another year I just drifted along. My oldest brother gave me a job in his doughnut shop. I cut down on my drug use but continued to drink heavily. One night I had been out drinking and lost the key to my apartment. All I could do was wait in the car and listen to the radio. While changing stations I came across the station broadcasting a program called "Unshackled" from the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. I heard on that program how God could change a person's life, how He could take drug addicts, alcoholics, whoever, and make something of their lives through Christ. For about a month I would get up late at night, put on my stereo headphones, and listen to this station. Finally, I decided to try church and see what I could find. Since

I had no church background, I didn't know which church to attend.

Daren's mother, Phyllis, was a Nazarene. I knew she went to church Sunday morning and evening, so I thought I could go with her. Of course, she agreed to it, so on July 4, 1970, I went to church for the first time in my life.

I felt strange! The people were friendly and seemed glad that I had come, but I felt out of place. I wasn't used to the music or listening to a choir singing from a hymnal, but I listened, sang, and prayed with everyone else. I really listened to the sermon. The preacher gave an altar call, but I just couldn't go forward. I knew God was speaking to me. I decided to return the next Sunday, July 11.

As Pastor James preached, God spoke to me. I was under such powerful conviction that I thought my heart would burst. When the altar call was given, I was sweating and shaking so hard that I thought I was going to have a heart attack. I let go of the pew and I felt that Jesus took my hand. Down to the altar I went. People gathered all around me and started praying *for me*. I wasn't sure about what was going on, but I knew that I needed a new life, a different life. I confessed my sins and asked God to forgive me. I asked Jesus Christ to be my Savior. There in that little Nazarene church God changed my life. I rose from that altar knowing that I was born again.

About a month later I definitely felt God had called me into the ministry. I had an overwhelming desire to preach. In September I enrolled at Pasadena (Nazarene) College to begin my ministerial training.

My former drug use had an after-effect. When I started college I could hardly read or write. Because of the drugs I had taken, I was fortunate if I could read an hour a day. I suffered tremendous headaches that seriously hindered my studying. Because of all this, it took me six years to graduate. I graduated in 1976 from Point Loma Nazarene College. (The college had moved from Pasadena to San Diego.)

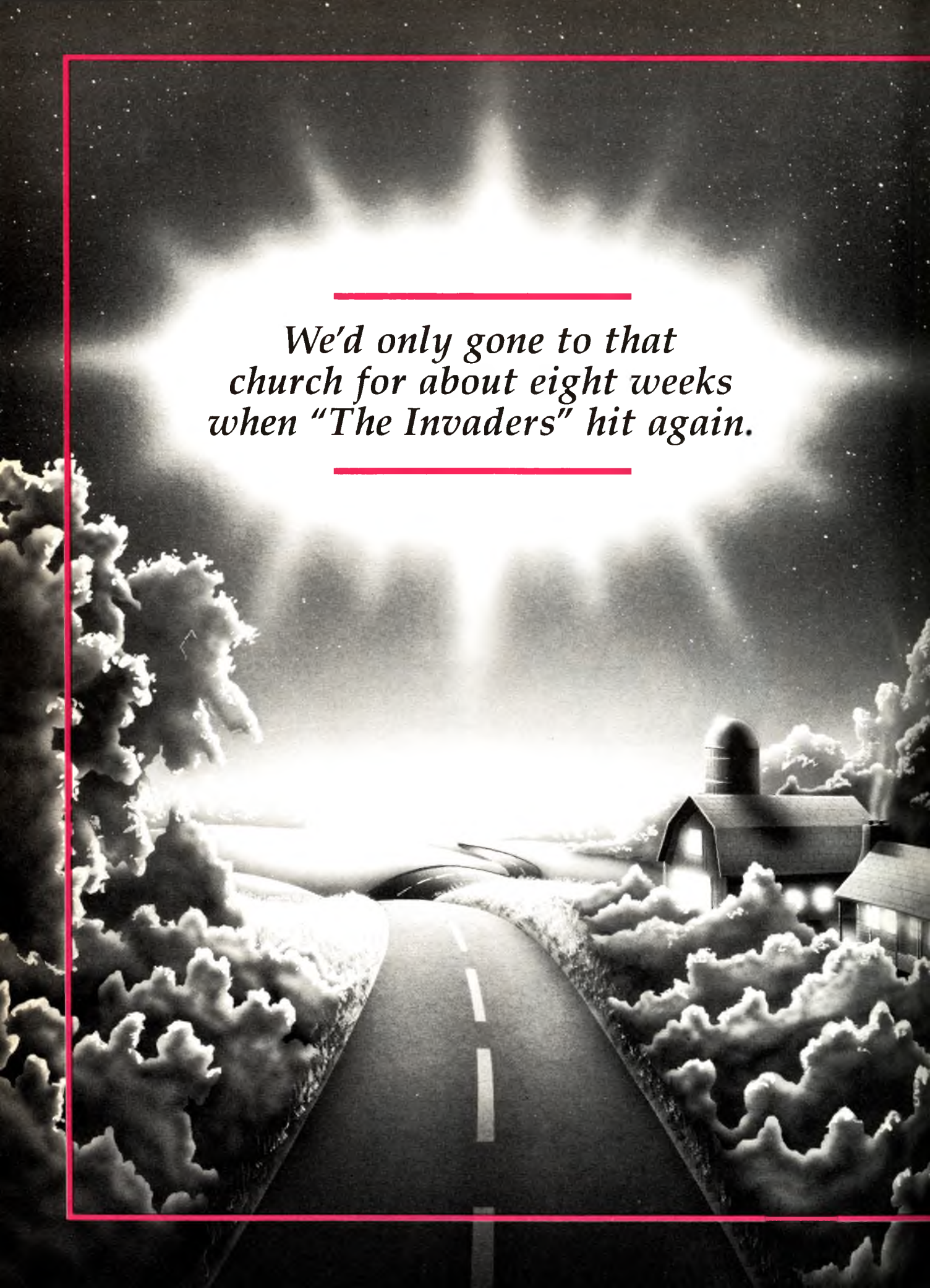
During my junior year of college I met Dr. Willard Taylor, and he convinced me of the need for seminary training. I attended Nazarene Theological Seminary, graduating in 1979.

During my last year at NTS, I took courses from Dr. Paul Orjala and Dr. Donald Owens in missions and church growth. I studied church growth for a full year. When I moved to Eagle Rock, Calif., on the Los Angeles District, I found myself next door to Fuller Seminary. In 15 minutes I could be on campus. I decided to apply for admission into the doctor of ministry program. I was accepted and received my D.Min. degree in church growth on June 9, 1985.

I am presently pastoring, putting into practice the lessons learned about church growth. To God be the glory! □



George S. Halliwell is an elder in the Church of the Nazarene, and senior pastor at Newport, Oregon.

A surreal landscape featuring a two-lane road that curves into the distance. The road is flanked by dense, billowing clouds that resemble smoke or steam. In the background, a barn with a silo is visible, partially obscured by the clouds. The sky is dark with a bright, glowing light source that creates a strong lens flare effect, illuminating the scene. The entire image is framed by a thin red border.

*We'd only gone to that
church for about eight weeks
when "The Invaders" hit again.*

INVADED!

BY BOB EVELAND
AS TOLD TO DANA DUNMYER

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For five years I had worked 12 to 15 hours a day, six days a week. When Sunday rolled around, that was the day to sleep in, sit around, and take it easy. That was Karen's and my accepted routine, and it worked just fine until "The Invaders" came along.

"The Invaders" first hit at my mother-in-law's home. She had started attending the First Church of the Nazarene in Hammond, Ind., just before she died, and it wasn't long until the pastor and a couple of people from the church came right to her home and invaded her privacy. Well, that's the way it looked to me. But Dorothy, my mother-in-law, "got saved" right there in her home. She was ecstatic!

I met Pastor Howe in Dorothy's home before she died, and I don't mind telling you, that pastor and his people made me feel uncomfortable.

Dorothy had gotten along without church all her life, but here she was telling us the thing she regretted most about her life was that she'd never taught Karen and her other children about the Lord. She said she would love for them to go to church. We couldn't get that out of our minds after her death.

After Dorothy's funeral, the ladies from that church had a dinner, you know, like they do. Everybody was so super, so great to us. Karen and I went home and talked about it.

"You know, those are good people to help us when we don't even know them."

"Yeah. They were so kind and good to us. Maybe we ought to start going to church. Sometimes I feel something's missing in our lives."

"Maybe. But not that church! I'm not too crazy about going there."

So we went to several other churches. We were neither bothered nor pleased afterward. And then one week Karen said she'd like to go back to that Nazarene church because she knew some people there.

Once again, even the people we didn't know were nice to us. The church was so alive! The pastor's preaching was vibrant! The choir was great! We really liked the church. It was the doctrine that bothered us. We didn't like the doctrine or the "rules," so we went back to visiting other churches. After the Nazarene church, they all seemed too quiet and drab. We didn't get anything out of it.

Back we went to the Nazarene church. We'd go, we decided. We just wouldn't join. We told them so, and they said, "That's just fine. We just want you to come. You can go here the rest of your life and not join if that's what you want."

You can't fight that, so we decided that's where we'd attend church. But we wouldn't go to Sunday School. We didn't need that, and when they invited us, we told them so.

They didn't put pressure on us, but at the same time, we felt like somebody or something was tugging at us. In three weeks we were there—in Sunday School—and we loved it! Like Karen says, every time we had a question about something, it seemed like the answer always came the very next week in Sunday School. We had a lot of questions. But it was like somebody knew what we were struggling with and had the answers ready ahead of time.

We'd only gone to that church for about eight weeks when "The Invaders" hit again. This time it was by invitation. We invited other friends and family, seven in all, to our home that night, and Pastor Howe talked to us about what it meant to receive Christ as Savior. Karen and I knew that was what we needed, and that night she and I and my mom bought the whole package. We prayed as the pastor led us, confessing that we were sinners and needed Christ.

No more sleeping in and goofing off on Sundays! Karen and I, and my mom, are all involved in this great church. Karen in her quiet, supportive way ministers to people and helps in Caravan* and LIFT. I'm president of our Sunday School class, help in Caravan, and am on the church board. Mom is chairperson for Senior Adult Ministries and helps in Caravan. We haul a lot of people to church. We want to be here when the church is open to add our gifts in ministry.

Hammond First is a great church, and I think the Lord is here. The Holy Spirit is guiding this church. It is reaching out, meeting people's needs in all kinds of ways. This church just flows with love and caring and warmth, and the people are not afraid to get their hands dirty. We help the poor with food and clothing. I've never met such a bunch of people in my life. That's the truth. The Lord's got a great church here, and we want to be part of it. □

*Caravan is a ministry to children.



Bob Eveland is vice president and manager of Howard Cab Company in Calumet City, Illinois, where he and Karen reside.

Dana Dunmyer, an ordained elder, is pastor of first Church of the Nazarene, Hammond, Indiana.

TO DIE IN PEACE

by Michael J. Christensen



James, 60, and Sammy, 6 months, both terminally ill. Shortly after this photo was taken, James slipped into a coma.

The greatest aim in human life is to die in peace with God" (Mother Teresa). I will never forget this sign at the entrance to Mother Teresa's homes for the dying where I worked for several days last year.

After that experience, I was excited to learn that there was a hospice center in San Francisco, just a few blocks from Golden Gate Community, my church home.

HOSPICE is a place of sanctuary where those with six months or less left of life can find rest before they die. Hospice care also extends to the home when family members of a dying person are able to care for the patient with guidance from professionals.

Since October 1984, Golden Gate Community has conducted Sunday services at the in-patient unit. Church members visit patients, pray and sing, and lead an ever-changing hospice congregation in the worship of God.

Eighty percent of the patients die each month! Hospice ministry does not result in church growth, but our efforts help to extend God's kingdom.

Patient participation in our services is limited to sporadic atten-

tion and verbalization. How much content of a service is heard and understood by those who are heavily medicated? I am convinced that the Spirit of God, through our prayers, songs, vestments, candles, and other symbols of the church, communicates with the spirits of those present in ways that cannot always be observed.

James Smith was one of a thousand patients in San Francisco's hospice program since its origin in 1982. He became our adopted brother in Christ. James, an orphan, finally found a family before he died. His story illustrates how Christians can make a difference in a world of suffering and death.

Born Clarence Smith in Kansas City in 1924, James told me, "I remember seeing my mother *once*." As he recalled his earliest memories, I felt his pain. His mother abandoned the family; his father was stabbed to death in a drunken brawl. James was orphaned at age three.

His brother, James, and two sisters were placed in an orphanage in Little Blue, Mo., the boys in one area, the girls in another. Being black, they were separated from the white children. James remembers sneaking downstairs to wave over the fence to his sisters.

He remembered the orphanage director as a cruel man who used hard oak planks as paddles. Later, James was sent to another home that seemed more like a family. The director, Miss Grady, was kinder and the food was better. James attended Wednesday evening church services.

As soon as he was old enough, James joined the navy and was stationed on Treasure Island, situated in the bay between San Francisco and Oakland. He sailed the Pacific during World War II. After the war, he stayed in San Francisco working as a longshoreman. He married, but it lasted only a year. He described his life as lonely and uneventful.

James lost contact with his siblings over the years. When bone cancer was diagnosed in 1984, he was 60 and had no idea where any of his family lived.

Alone in the world, James came to the hospice center about the time we began our ministry there. When Bob Coston first invited

James to attend our services, he refused. Asked if he wanted prayer or a special song, he said no. Bitter against God and people, he was in no mood for church.

Bob Coston and Robin Kaiser, from our church, visited him regularly and often sang outside his room. Persistence won and his heart softened. James finally ventured to a service and soon became the most enthusiastic member of the hospice congregation.

During his final months, James became known for his joy and encouragement. All of the hospice staff remarked on how he had completely changed. Church members realized James had made peace with God.

In April 1985, James asked to be baptized. On Easter Sunday, church members picked him up at the hospice and wheeled him down the hill to the Oak Street House for the service. Too weak to walk, too tormented by pain to be without an automatic syringe that steadily injected morphine into his veins, too much in love with life to resign himself to death, James embraced the meaning of Easter as Pastor Michael Dotson sprinkled him with water. "I am the resurrection and the life," someone reminded him. "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25, NIV).

When making funeral plans, James said, "I wish I were adopted." Pastor Dotson offered to adopt him into the membership of Golden Gate Community Church of the Nazarene. James glowed with pleasure; an adoption date was set; and the papers were drawn up.

On Sunday, July 28, during the hospice service, James received an official certificate of membership signed by the members of the church. "This is wonderful! This is gorgeous! Bless the Lord Jesus Christ!" James exclaimed repeatedly.

After the service a few of us remained with James in the parlor and discussed his funeral and burial. He wanted a memorial service at the church and we agreed. "What hymn would you like your family to sing?" we asked.

"'Amazing Grace' is my favorite," he said with a wide grin.

I tape-recorded one of James' last

(Continued on page 10)

The Prodigal

*The far country—
all I miss—
home, Father's voice.
Is lostness this?*

*So short this pleasure
span of mine,
from song and mirth
to husks and swine!*

*Memory haunts my
throbbing brain,
but for pride I'd
head home again.*

*Love penetrates my
soundproof wall—
I think I hear
my Father's call!*

—ALLEN A. BENNETT
Nampa, Idaho

TO DIE IN PEACE

(Continued from page 9)

conversations. I asked him for a final message to his church family. He spoke these memorable words:

"Now I'm a member of the church. And I appreciate it very much ... that the Church of the Nazarene adopted me ... it feels wonderful."

"Did you think you would ever be adopted?" I asked.

"No ... I had no family. I didn't have much of a life. I just grew up. It didn't seem to bother me. But later in life, I guess it kinda did."

"How did you become a Christian, James?"

"It was Lucinda [a friend who faithfully visited him]. She talked me into it. First I ignored her. I didn't want to hear what she had to say. I don't know what changed my mind. ..."

"But you changed, James," I reminded him. "You were born again! And now you are adopted into the family of God, forever!"

James grinned and thanked us all again for caring.

A few days later, James slipped into a coma. On Thursday, August 15, 1985, he went to be with his Lord. The following Sunday his church family celebrated his transition. All his friends were present, including hospice staff members and volunteers. Several recounted how James had affected their lives. There was much rejoicing over an orphan who found his place in the family of God. His beautifully framed certificate of adoption was hung on the wall of the church as a permanent memorial to James and the truth he embodied—"the greatest aim in human life is to die in peace with God."

The Lord takes a special interest in the sick and dying, and in the orphans and widows of the world. He calls us to the task of caring for them in His name. In welcoming and loving the "least of these," we are welcoming and loving Christ, who died so that we could live forever. ☐

Editor's Note: Unfortunately, the hospice has lost its funding and had to be closed.

Michael J. Christensen is an elder in the Church of the Nazarene and mission director of our Golden Gate Community Church in San Francisco.



I SOUGHT HIM

I sought Him with the intellect,

With reason's measured ways,

But found no satisfying God

To bless my wayward days.

I sought to find Him through my deeds,

To build a God within;

I only found an empty heart

Still blackened with my sin.

I tried the door of feeling then,

To touch His lovely face;

But this, too, did not meet my need,

Or fill me with His grace.

And then one day in deep despair,

Driven by sin's fierce goad,

I lifted up my head to find

He'd taken all my load.

I found Him at the place of need,

The place I hated so,

And now I know there is no place

Where He would never go.

He walks with me and talks with me,

He shares my every care.

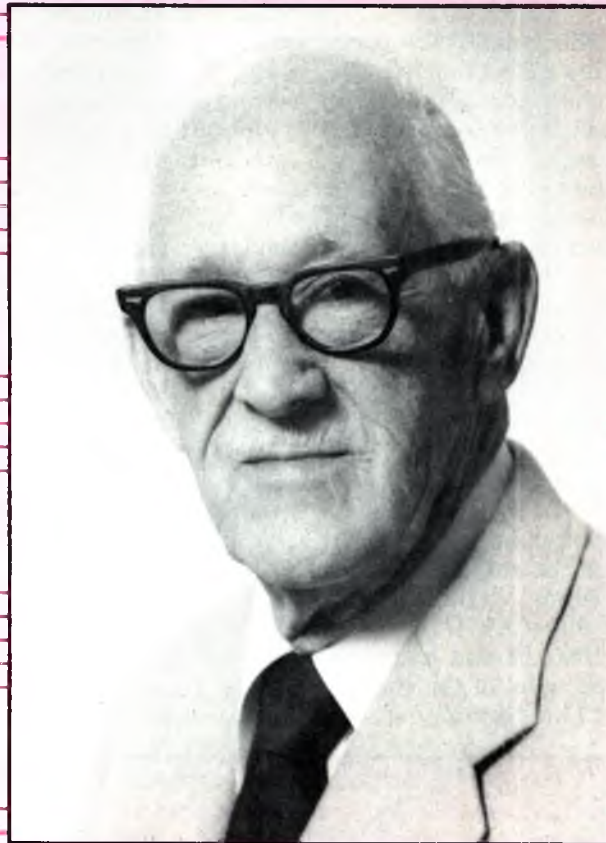
He knows my weakness and my strength

And He is always there.



—JOHN A. WRIGHT
Weidman, Michigan

A SONG IN



THE NIGHT

B Y E R N E S T C . L E W I S

Kenneth W. Cusley was a professional singer and through the years he was apparently content with his career.

For over 10 years he was a vocalist with the Guy Lombardo orchestra. During this period in his life a momentous change was experienced. Cusley was walking down a street one evening in Beacon, N.Y., when he heard music and singing coming from a church. He walked past the building, but drawn by

the music, he turned back and entered the sanctuary.

It was the Church of the Nazarene, and the pastor at that time—1937—was Morris Wilson. In that very service, after a gospel message by the pastor, and while the congregation was singing, “Ye who are weary, come home,” Mr. Cusley went to the altar of prayer and gave his heart to Christ.

For two years he attended that church, and he affirms that Pastor Wilson

worked faithfully to help him. Among other things, he quit smoking and became involved in the worship and work of the church.

But Cusley made a bad decision, one repeated too often in too many lives. He foolishly allowed his career to usurp the place of Christ at the center of his life. Before long he dropped out of church and resumed some detrimental habits, including smoking.

Moving to the Midwest, Cusley sang with the Glen Gray orchestra and the Coon Saunders orchestra in Kansas City. Later on he worked as a children's photographer for a Kansas City studio.

He moved again, this time to the Eastern Shore, where he worked first as a fisherman, and then as a realtor in Virginia Beach, Va.

Several years ago his wife died. Shortly afterward doctors discovered that Cusley had cancer of the throat. As his health rapidly deteriorated, he became increasingly concerned about getting his niece, Delores Merritt, involved in a good church. The happy times he had experienced in the Church of the Nazarene in Beacon, N.Y., were often in his memory.

Cusley looked up the address of First Church of the Nazarene, Virginia Beach, in the telephone directory. One afternoon in October 1985, he and his niece drove into the parking lot of the church just as my wife and I were driving out. We

got acquainted. He asked if I knew Morris Wilson and told me he was checking out the Church of the Nazarene after nearly 50 years.

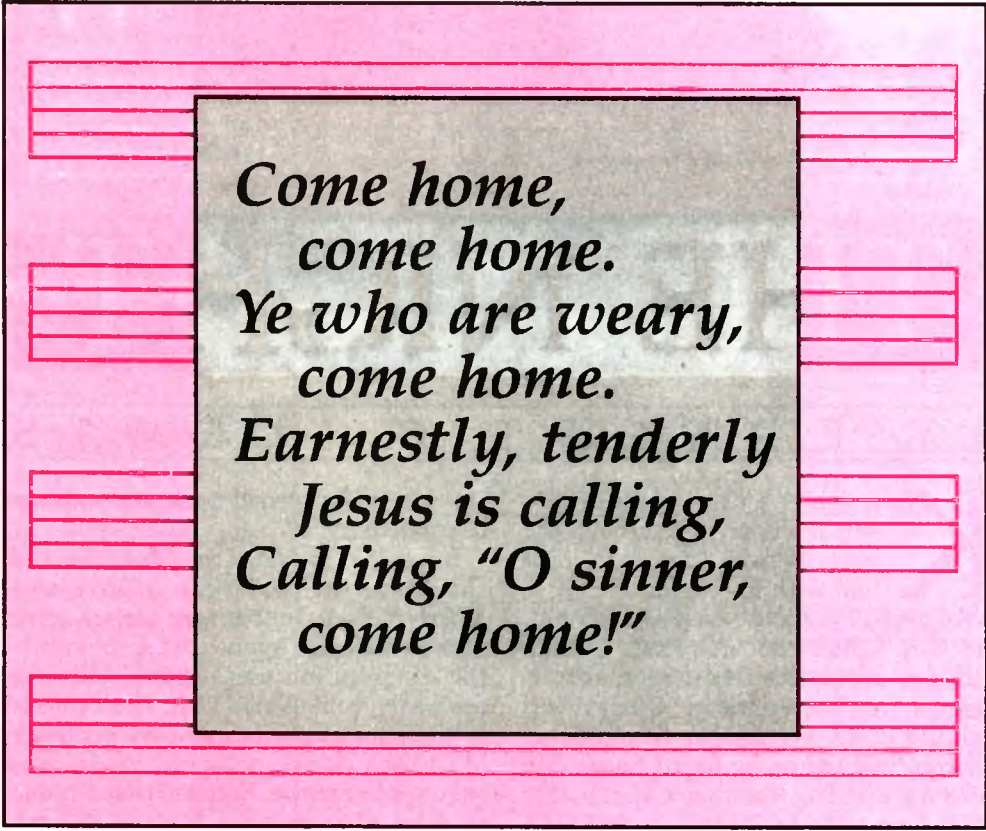
Mr. Cusley and Delores started attending services the next Sunday, and a few Sundays later both came to the altar and found forgiveness and peace through Jesus Christ.

Recently Mr. Cusley suffered a recurrence of his throat and lung problems. As this is being written, he is in a Virginia Beach hospital, where a tracheotomy was performed.

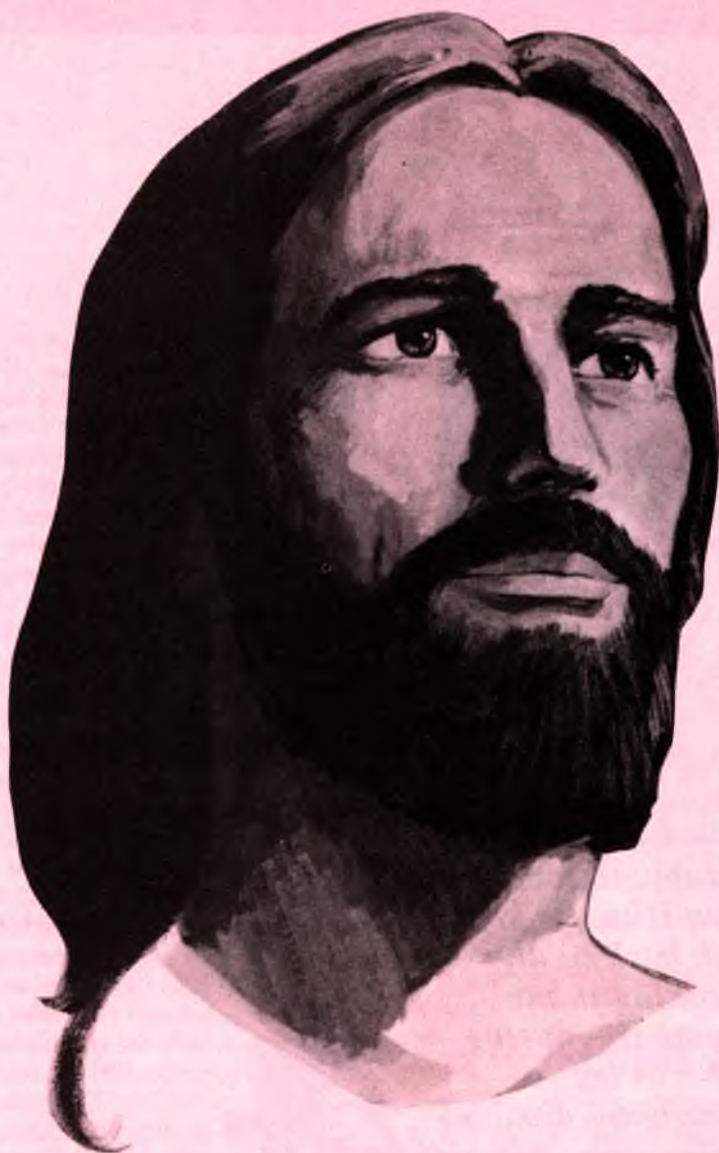
Unable to speak, he communicates with gestures and by writing notes. In these he expresses his love for the Lord and confesses that life had become empty and meaningless without Christ. He is praying that he will be able to attend church again and testify to the grace of God. Indeed, he is eager now to be baptized and to join the church. We join him in these prayers, and in praise to God for His transforming power in our lives. The sweetest music of all is that which praises the Savior. With the Psalmist, Mr. Cusley can say, "In the night his song shall be with me" (Psalm 42:8). □

Editor's Note: Since this article was prepared for publication, Mr. Cusley was baptized, received into the church, and the Lord took him home to heaven.

Ernest C. Lewis, an elder, is pastor of First Church of the Nazarene, Virginia Beach, Virginia.



*Come home,
come home.
Ye who are weary,
come home.
Earnestly, tenderly
Jesus is calling,
Calling, "O sinner,
come home!"*



My Days of Days

*I knew that He would heal my ills
Could I but reach His side;
'Twas simple faith that told me so
And would not be denied.*

*A trembling touch upon His robe—
I need not speak a word—
And then I'd mingle with the crowd
And slip away, unheard.*

*"He is but passing by," folks said.
"He'll have no time for you."
But my heart told me differently,
And what it said was true.*

*For Jesus paused, and saw my need.
He sensed the pain I bore,
And offered freely unto me
New life forevermore.*

*I never can forget the scene—
It satisfied my soul—
The day the Master smiled and said,
"Your faith has made you whole."*

—JESSIE WILLMOTT
Weston-Super-Mare, Avon, England

OUR MARRIAGE WAS SAVED

BY DANIEL M. BIXLER

I'm so thankful for His stubborn love. When I turned my back on Him, He kept on loving me. Now I think back to all the times that He was working in my life when I didn't even know it—during my auto accident, when I was led to Oklahoma, and even through my divorce.

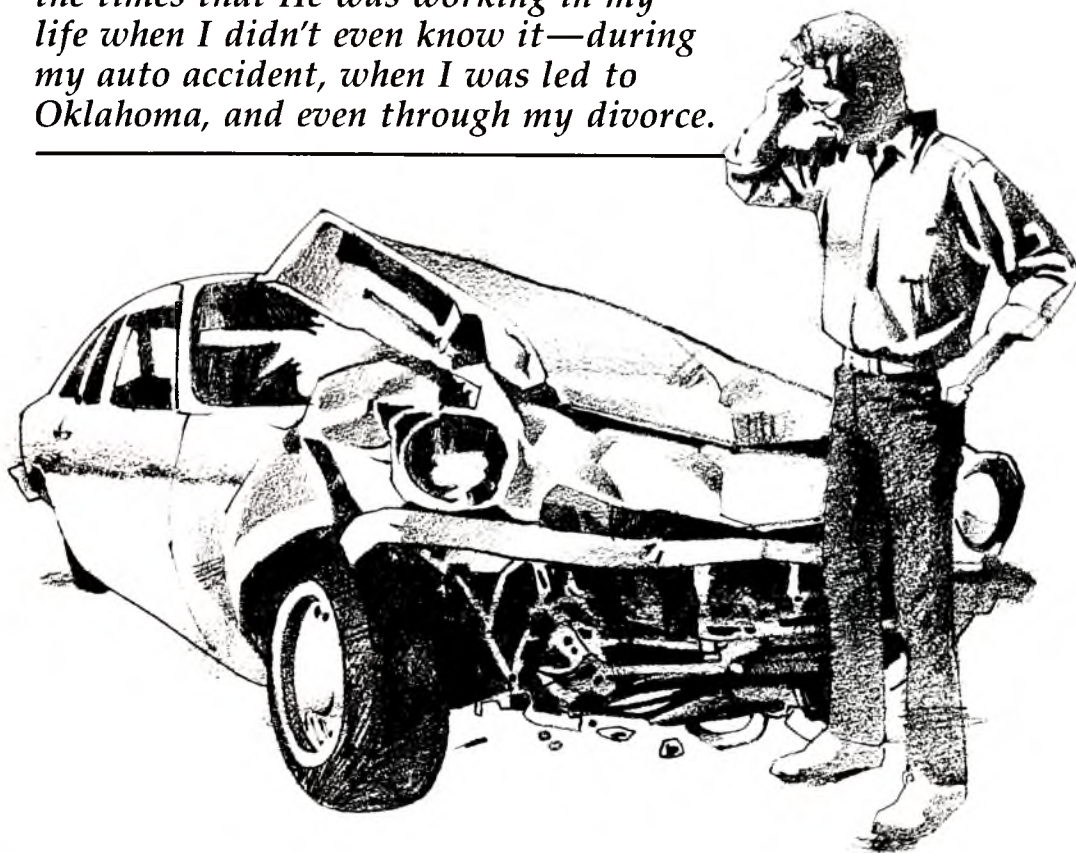
When I first met my wife, Jennie, I didn't know what a "holiness" church was! About the only times I remembered going to church were at Easter and Christmas. When I started dating Jennie we attended her church, First Church of the Nazarene, Alexandria, Ind., on Sunday nights. I could tell this church was different, but I didn't know how. Her grandfather puzzled me. After the hymn was completed he would start singing another song. I couldn't understand this at all then. But thank God for her grandparents and family, for the church family, and for their intercessory prayers. Without them I never would have found my Lord.

Before I met Jennie I got messed up with the wrong crowd. I followed the supposedly popular crowd. Even in high school we drank liquor and partied all the time, but I never could find true happiness. I'm thankful for Jesus' stubborn love. He sought me and watched over me. While I was still dating my wife, I had a bad automobile accident. I wasn't even hurt except for a scratch

on my elbow. I'm so thankful our Lord never turns His back on us, for if He did, I might not be here now.

Jennie and I married in the summer of 1973. Everything was great for a while. Though my wife had gone to church all her life, she was backslidden. We went to church occasionally, to put in an appearance, but we didn't worship God daily. In 1976 we were blessed with a beautiful baby girl. I was drinking and running around with my buddies from work. This continued to drive a wedge between me and my wife. Other serious marital problems complicated our lives until we finally could not stand each other any more. We got a divorce in April 1981. Still the Lord pursued us in His stubborn love!

With my life in such a mess I decided to get away from it all. A job transfer



took me to Oklahoma. Now I was really alone. Away from all my problems, I could be happy at last. But, I couldn't understand it—I kept getting lonelier and lonelier.

One lonely day I remembered that I used to get comfort in church. So I picked up a telephone book, looked under "Nazarene churches," and saw the listing for Norman First Church of the Nazarene. That Sunday night I attended. They greeted me with open arms, and I started going regularly.

Meanwhile, my wife and I kept up with letters and phone calls. It seemed that we were beginning to see each other in a new light. She had turned her life over to God a few months after our divorce. She once told me that if she ever got married again, she wanted to marry a man who was a Christian and have a Christian home. I hadn't made that commitment yet, but it seemed that we were growing closer and closer together across the miles.

I went home to Indiana for the Christmas holidays of 1981. On New Year's Eve, 1981, I attended a Communion service at church with my wife. Then and there I knelt at the altar and asked God to forgive my sins, and He saved me! When He saved me, He started healing me, my wife, and our broken marriage. Shortly thereafter, on February 12, 1982, we reaffirmed our vows to God and got remarried.

We moved to Oklahoma, and with the help of a loving God and a caring church family, we were able to put our lives and marriage back together. I was sanctified wholly shortly after returning to Oklahoma. Our pastor came to visit in our home. He asked me if I was sanctified, and I knew that I hadn't asked the Lord to perform that cleansing, filling work in my life. Kneeling there in our living room, I received what I had asked for—a whole new dimension of life in Jesus Christ!

I'm so thankful for His stubborn love. When I turned my back on Him, He kept on loving me. Now I think back to all the times that He was working in my life when I didn't even know it—during my auto accident, when I was led to Oklahoma, and even through my divorce. When I didn't know the Lord, I had to handle my problems by myself. Now the Lord helps me solve my problems by leading me daily. Even the low times aren't so bad, for now I know the Lord will see me through.

I have so many blessings to be thankful for. He brought us back to Indiana and home and family and church. He also blessed us with a healthy baby boy. I know now that if I put my trust in Him, He will see me through! □



Daniel M. Bixler works for the Delco Remy Division of General Motors in Anderson, Indiana, and resides with his family in Alexandria.

HE CALLED, HE SOUGHT, HE LOVED

*He called me but I answered not—
To things of God my eyes were dim;
He called once more, "Come unto me,"
And still I did not welcome Him.*

*He sought me but I sought Him not—
Too taken up with tinsel toys;
I clutched the fleeting things of earth,
I loved the world and all its joys.*

*He loved me but I loved Him not
And still He would not let me go;
And now Christ is my Savior, Friend—
The patient Lord who loved me so!*

—ROY J. WILKINS
Dodge Center, Minnesota

PI'S STORY— A HOME AT LAST!



*When my father and
my mother forsake me,
then the Lord will take
me up.*

—PSALM 27:10

In childhood I was made to feel unimportant, unneeded, and unwanted. Born during the Depression, 1 of 14 children, my early years were spent bouncing between a loveless home and a loveless orphanage.

My mother herself was an orphan in Xenia, Ohio. At the age of 16, she accepted a marriage proposal from my father. He was then a widower of 36 with three children. To escape the orphanage she agreed to the marriage.

The marriage was doomed. My father boasted of taking his first drink and having his first smoke at age 4. At 36 he was a seasoned alcoholic. To make matters worse for Mother, the stepchildren did not accept her, and she soon had children of her own—four boys, each a year apart. With no one to help her, Mother did not welcome the additional children.

After the fourth boy was born, father contracted typhoid fever. By then the marriage was stormy. Three girls came next; one of them died of malnutrition when six weeks old. I was the next born. Another child died of malnutrition following my entry into this troubled family. Jobs could not be found and food was scarce.

When I was four, we children were taken from our parents and placed in an orphanage. The state intervened because we were grossly neglected. Lacking clothes and shoes, we had not been going to school. My mother wasn't grieved by the state's action. She was sick of a drunken husband and all those children.

The older children refused to stay at the orphanage. Some went into military service; others went to detention homes to await adoption.

In the orphanage each small child was assigned to an older child who helped with chores and personal needs. My helper was Suzi, one of my sisters. When she was 12, she stood too close to a heater and her dress caught fire. Suzi panicked and ran, spreading the flames swiftly. Burned over 90 percent of her body, she only lived three days. The tragedy was etched deeply on my seven-year-old's mind. I wondered, "Is there a God? Does anyone care?"

Suzi's death shook my parents, and they took us home again. Six months later we were returned to the orphanage.

From the orphanage we were bused to school and church. The school was embarrassed to have us. Our poor clothing set us apart. This really hurt, for I was proud and aggressive, and I wanted desperately to be accepted.

Church was not as bad. My Sunday School teacher, Charlotte, was 17, and she had five of us in her class. She was the first person who ever said to me, "I love you." She

BY PI RANDALL



Pi Randall and her husband, James, reside in Kettering, Ohio. They are active members of Parkview Church of the Nazarene, Dayton. She is a registered nurse and works part-time in a local hospital.

would take us home with her where we played games and ate ice cream, while she told us about her call to serve the Lord on a mission field—whatever that was!

When I was 12, during another of our brief stays at home, my mother told me something good was going to happen. She had to go to town, but I was to clean the house and get the little ones bathed and dressed. The house was a one-room converted chicken coop, but I cleaned it well and got the children ready. I was so excited!

A knock at the door! There stood the authorities from the orphanage. My heart sank. They explained that my parents were getting a divorce, the preschool children would be placed in foster homes, the rest of us would go back to the orphanage. I tried to call Mother, but she wouldn't come to the phone. She couldn't face me.

I saw a taxi approaching the orphanage one day, my mother in it. I thought she was coming to visit us, but she left in the same taxi a few minutes later. I sneaked into the office and found signed adoption papers for the little ones. I copied the data and kept it, determined to see them again.

The orphanage was worse now. I grieved myself into a bad state of health. At age 12, I weighed 70 pounds. The visiting doctor was appalled. I was hospitalized and a counselor was urged for me. I chose Charlotte, my former Sunday School teacher. She prayed with me often and helped me see that we were better off in the orphanage than in the home environment. She told me, "Jesus loves you. You can be somebody."

During my senior year of high school I became desperate. Treatment was repressive, and marriage or domestic service were my only options, both unattractive.

On my lunch hour one day, I walked uptown and into a lawyer's office. I *would* get some help. How was I to know an appointment and money were necessary to see a lawyer? He noted my distress and invited me into his office. As I poured out my heart, he listened with keen interest. He was a City Commissioner, and the orphanage was suspected of misusing Social Security funds. Evidence was needed and I was a witness. An investigation followed. I never had it so good! The administrators dared not mistreat me now!

One lonely night I cried out to God, saying, "If You really care for me, let's see You work out all these obstacles." I promised to serve Him if He would help me.

He began at once to change my life. The next day, an assembly was held to recruit student nurses. "Is anyone here who has always wanted to be a nurse, but for whom it looks impossible?" Up went my hand! With no prep

courses, no funding, and no parental support, how could it be more impossible?

The recruiter urged me to try the preentrance exam. The orphanage administrator laughed—"You won't even score." But I ranked in the top 10 percent of those tested, thanks to lucky guesses on multiple-choice questions.

I became a celebrity in our little town—even got my picture in the paper. As I prayed and trusted, the Lord worked things out—a full tuition scholarship and \$8.00 a month toward clothing and incidentals.

On admission day all my earthly possessions were packed in a cereal carton. A porter asked for my luggage. I had never seen luggage! When other girls arrived with their families and suitcases, I cried to the Lord, "Have You brought me here to forsake me now?" Of course, He had not.

My roommate was a gem, with one exception—she smoked. Three weeks later she swapped me for another smoker. My new roommate was from a Nazarene family. Her mother had asked the local Church of the Nazarene to help nurture her homesick daughter.

I went to church with her, just for kicks. A quartet from Olivet Nazarene College was there one night. I knew I would like the guys! But a revival meeting was in progress, the evangelist was persistent, and I went to the altar and surrendered my heart completely to Christ.

At church I met Jim, who would later become my husband. He had a wonderful family, so strong and stable! They took me in. His mother loved me and taught me many things.

Jim and I had a lovely church wedding at the end of my senior year. Some of my family were present.

I never got the adopted mother I wanted, but I have a great Father. I serve Him today as nursery supervisor in our Parkview church, a post I've had for 30 years. My babies are tenderly cared for, including the little "bus children."

My favorite hymn is "He Lifted Me," and truly He did. Instead of a converted chicken coop with a path, I live in a neat tri-level home with four baths. I work as a part-time nurse at a hospital. I have three wonderful children, who nearly die when I tell of my past. They can't comprehend my story—it's too remote from a mother active in church and involved in ministry to others' needs.

A little footnote: I found the brother and sister I was parted from after 15 years. What a reunion! My sister had been accepted into the same nursing school from which I graduated. Small world, great God!

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Psalm 27:10). □

THE NIGHT THE "JONES BOYS" CAME TO CHURCH



Chaplain Max Jones looks on as a man he led to Christ gives his testimony before a group of prisoners

BY PAT VERBAL

On a recent Sunday evening, ex-convicts from all over the state of Florida began filling the platform of Orlando Central Church of the Nazarene. They came to share the transforming difference Jesus Christ had made in their lives through the example of a "gutsy" prison chaplain, Max Jones. Some were black and some were white. They had committed large crimes and small ones. They had been in high society and low. They had served long prison terms and short ones. They had been hated and filled with hatred, but there they were, one by one testifying to a new wholeness because one man refused to be their judge and decided to show them God's love. They were the "Jones boys"—the spiritual offspring of Chaplain Jones.

The occasion was the dedication of a book about Chaplain Max titled *End of the Line*, by Joan Jacquart.

As Max Jones walked through Glades Correctional Institution for 11 years and the Florida State Prison for 6 years, his message never changed: "God loves you and has a plan for your life!" Though they abused him at times, Max's love never waned. He lived daily where they lived and walked jail blocks at the risk of his life. He prayed for and with every prisoner he visited. He was especially drawn to the dreaded death row prisoners; those at the "end of the line." Max knew he could offer them hope where there had been none . . . the hope of heaven, but also the hope of peace in a wicked place. And in the same place where they believed on Christ, they were tested and stood fast in their faith because Max established Bible studies, opened chapel doors, formed prison witness teams, and planned for them to grow and to serve.

What surprised most of us at Orlando Central Church that evening was how little we had known of Max's prison ministry, though we enjoyed his warm smile from the choir loft Sunday after Sunday. We



(R. to l.) Chaplain Curt Bowers, director of Chaplaincy Ministries, Kansas City; Myrtle Jones; and Chaplain Max Jones who ministers to prisoners in the Orange County jails and other Florida state facilities. The Joneses are members of Orlando Central Church of the Nazarene.

had been blessed by his deep bass voice in his family quartet specials. His caring spirit flowed from his hearty handshake. But we were unaware of the depth and scope of his ministry, revealed to us this evening as ex-cons stood and declared their faith in Christ and their love and gratitude to Chaplain Max. He and his wife, Myrtle, sat on the platform with faces aglow, listening to the testimonies of these men who are living useful, exciting Christian lives since their release from prison.

Frank Constantino received a full pardon and has served for nine years on the governor's advisory staff for the Florida prisons. He built and operates "The Bridge," a Christian Work Release Center in Orlando.

Jack Murphy, known as "Murf the Surf," is now a resident of The Bridge. He speaks in schools, colleges, and civic organizations, encouraging kids to go straight. He also works with Chaplain Jones, ministering to prisoners in the Orange County jails.

Austin Brown has served for 10 years as chaplain at Florida State Prison.

Calvin Arnold owns his own

business in Jacksonville and visits prisons often.

Daniel Grant has a prison ministry in Maryland and holds a supervisory position in the secular world.

Frank Lloyd runs his own business and does some preaching.

These are just a few of the "Jones boys."

Eight hundred people packed Orlando Central Church to capacity that night. Our usual Sunday night congregation is around 450. Respected members of our denomination, our city, and the state prison commissions gave plaques and commendations to Chaplain Jones and his family. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit spoke to us as we realized what one committed heart can do. Be true to your ministry whatever it is, and don't be surprised at what God will do.

And what about Max? He's still at it. Every morning, he fills his arms with literature and takes off down the row of prison cells at the Orange County jails to introduce as many as possible to his best Friend, Jesus Christ. □

Pat Verbal is director of children's ministries and director of the child care center at Central Church of the Nazarene, Orlando, Florida.



OUTSTANDING HANDICAPPED CITIZEN

BY FRANCES SIMPSON

I stood in Mary Ann's kitchen watching her put the finishing touches on the lunch to which my husband and I had been invited. Carefully she placed the meat loaf, baked potatoes, and tossed salad on the table. Later there would be Jell-O and cookies. Mary Ann seemed like any other single adult who had invited her pastor's family for dinner. But there was a difference; Mary Ann is blind.

Mary Ann Delong was born with retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited degenerative disease that causes gradual sight loss. In grade school she attended a special class for children with vision problems. She praises her teacher who taught her typing after school hours because she knew it would help her in years to come. By the time Mary Ann completed the sixth grade, she could barely see to read even large-print material.

During high school, an upper-classman read Mary Ann's lessons to her and gave her tests orally. In the evening, family members would help her complete her assignments. Mary Ann was graduated from high school in 1963, and two years later enrolled in business college. Again, her lessons were read to her.

After graduation from business college, Mary Ann began working at the County Welfare Department

in Marion, Ohio, as a dictaphone typist. At that time she moved into an apartment and began living on her own. The only sight that Mary Ann has is some light and object perception. Even this is unreliable most of the time. She does things through touch and uses a cane or someone's arm for guidance.

Today, Mary Ann is a receptionist for the Social Services Unit, typing case histories and dealing with all kinds of people. She uses an Optacon, an electronic device that enables the blind to read print from vibrations, to proofread and correct her typing. One of her assignments is typing a monthly report with 11 columns of figures. She uses a braille typewriter for labeling, message taking, record keeping, and so forth. Her coworkers call Mary Ann a professional in every respect.

Mary Ann believes her job, the Optacon, and many other things have come into her life through the providence of God. She admits she still has difficulty coping with some of the hurts and frustrations caused by blindness. She receives comfort and encouragement from friends and from reading God's Word. She also enjoys reading books authored by other handicapped persons. She states, "How wonderful that God has made us all different, yet we share enough common experiences that we can help each other."

Mary Ann is an active member of the First Church of the Nazarene in Marion, Ohio. She sings in the

church choir and takes both piano and voice lessons. She records the choir practices and sings along with the tapes at home to memorize the words. She also enjoys knitting, playing Scrabble (usually winning), and visiting with other people.

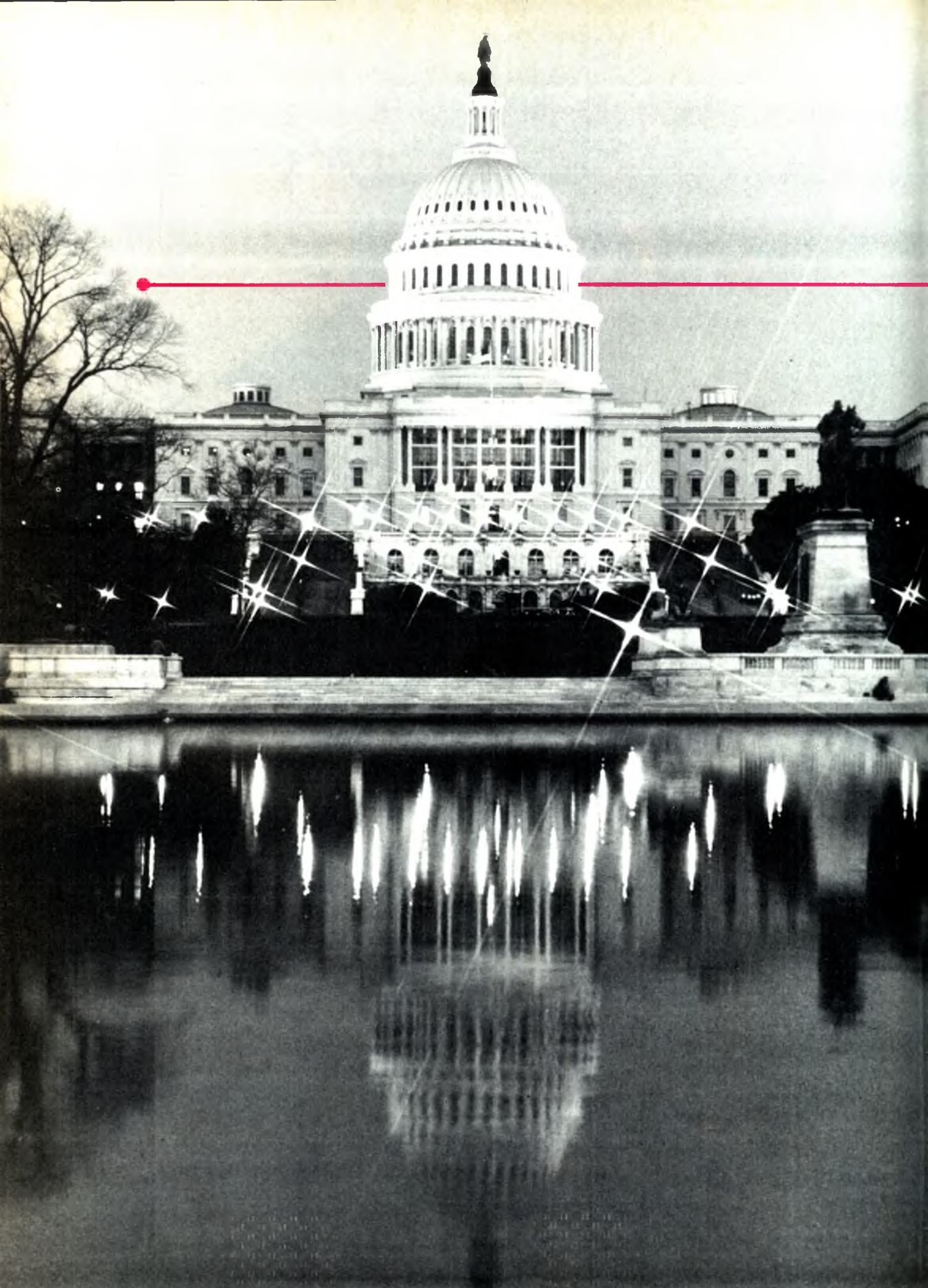
In 1979, Mary Ann was named the outstanding handicapped citizen by the Marion Area governor's committee in Employment for the Handicapped. As Marion's first recipient of this award, she was featured in several newspapers and magazines.

Mary Ann accepted Christ as Savior at the age of 12. In her late 20s she committed her life totally to Him. "I'm thankful," says Mary Ann, "that God cares about the total person and wants to help us in all areas of life. As Fanny J. Crosby wrote,

*Great things He hath taught us,
Great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing thro'
Jesus, the Son.*

Whether it's singing, entertaining guests, taking a friend out for breakfast, or giving an anonymous gift to someone in need, Mary Ann reaches out to make the world she cannot see a better place in which to live and grow. □

Frances Simpson is a free-lance writer and the wife of Eugene Simpson, superintendent of the North Carolina District of the Church of the Nazarene. They reside in Charlotte, North Carolina.



VOODOO

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL?

BY EVELYN SMITH

One Thursday afternoon the phone rang at First Church in Washington, D.C. A troubled voice on the other end asked to speak to the pastor. He wanted the pastor to come to his home; he needed to talk about a problem.

Often in a big city like Washington, when a call brings a request like this, the caller is wanting money to help pay the rent or other expenses that might be pressing.

The name and address were not familiar, but Pastor Smith made an appointment to visit the home on Saturday afternoon. When he went to the apartment, he met the Sejour family, from Haiti. A serious problem had arisen in their family, and they were turning to the church for help. They were not members of the Church of the Nazarene, but through contact with the missionaries and early pastors on the field in Haiti years before, they had become aware of the Church of the Nazarene, and looked in the phone book for our church when they had a problem and felt the pastor could help them.

Mr. Sejour told a story of being far from God and of practicing voodoo in his apartment for pay, not because he believed in it anymore, but he needed the money. He said, "Pastor, I want to get saved, and I want my family to get saved." His wife and children all agreed; they wanted to be saved also.

Pastor Smith prayed with them, and they all accepted Christ as Savior. As he was about to leave, Mr. Sejour said, "Take this case of voodoo articles with you—I do not want them in my home anymore."

What does a Nazarene pastor do with a case of voodoo articles? We carefully stored them in the garage until the next week. Pastor Smith suggested to Mr. Sejour that the articles should be burned publicly. Mr. Sejour agreed. A date was set for the following Sunday night after the evening service.

Mr. Sejour plays the saxophone beautifully and writes his own music. He brought his sax to church and played it and then gave his testimony in broken English (French is his native language). He then led the way with the pastor to the front churchyard at the corner of 16th Street and Webster, just five miles northwest of the White House, to burn the black case full of voodoo articles.

The congregation, made up of people of high and low

estate with many cultural differences, surrounded him with a circle of love while he lit a match. We sang "The Comforter Has Come."

As traffic whisked by the churchyard, with people wondering what was happening, we sang,

*Oh, spread the tidings round,
Wherever man is found,
The Comforter has come.*

As the candles melted, pictures burned, and incense bottles broke, Mr. Sejour played on his sax "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

When I observed all that was happening that Sunday evening, I thanked God for such an exciting place to minister as Washington, D.C.


(I also thanked God that no neighbors called the fire department because of an open fire on the church lawn!)

Washington is a city of power! My prayer for our church is that God will endue us with Pentecostal power. □

Evelyn Smith resides in Washington, D.C., where her husband, Samuel, is pastor of First Church of the Nazarene.

The Sejour family





I RAN FOR MY LIFE

by Ann E. Gaines

The telephone rang and echoed through the halls of the dorm of Meredith College in North Carolina. Who would be calling at this late hour when all the girls were to be in bed and lights out? I turned over in bed as I nestled in for a good night's sleep. Then the call came: "Ann, it's for you."

My mind raced with excitement. Who did I know that would call me this late? I threw on a robe and raced down the hall to the phone. I said a hesitant hello. The booming voice of the one I loved came over the line loud and clear. "Hi, Ann! There's a ticket at the depot for you to catch the next train to Syracuse." My thoughts were shaken and I began making all kinds of excuses, but from the other end came an ultimatum, "Come tonight or never!" With my heart pounding, and not weighing the consequences, I told him, "I'll be there."

Those three words, "I'll be there," started a chain of events that have never stopped. I ran back to my room and told my roommate what the call was all about. She was the only one in the school who knew about the big step I had taken a few months before. My mother had brought her mother and George Gaines from Knoxville, Tenn., where he and I had gone to high school. George was the big football star of Knoxville High, and we had gone together all year. With mother, grandmother, and George, I was

going to the big Tennessee-North Carolina game.

Saturday it began to drizzle, so George and I decided not to go to the game, but to ride around and have some time alone. It wasn't really the drizzle that kept us from the game—we were young and in love. We were driving down the main street of the little North Carolina town when I jokingly said, "This would be a good day to get married."

George slammed on the brakes and called to a man, "Is there someplace we can get married?"

The man replied, "They've been doing it here for hundreds of years." He stood on the running board and directed us to the courthouse a few blocks away.

George went in first and in a few minutes motioned me to come in. Before I could take a deep breath and get my heart to stop pounding, I was saying, "I do" to some very serious commitments like "in sickness and in health, until death do us part." When we walked out of the courthouse, we were man and wife.

Mother, Grandmother, and George left the next day and only my roommate knew my secret.

When George's ultimatum came, I knew that I had to finish what I had begun, as I had promised "until death do us part." I called a cab and told them to turn off their lights as they came up the long, stately drive of Meredith College. With a small suitcase I ran down the drive toward my new life.

As soon as I reached Syracuse, George took me to a small parsonage, and we were married again. We planned never to tell anyone about the first marriage. (My dear dad never knew about it, though he lived with me the last 10 years of his life.) This time we were married by Rev. Bates, a Free Methodist minister, my first contact with the strange people who call themselves Christians. After the marriage we phoned my parents to let them know where I was. They called off the search that was taking place on planes, trains, and buses traveling from North Carolina to New York.

Though I regret the heartache and anxiety I gave my parents, I am sure, as I ran down the sidewalk of

Meredith College and jumped into that cab that night, I was running from a life of sin and entering into a new life that would change me completely.

We were visiting George's Aunt Ettie a few months later, and she invited us to go to a revival in her church. These were the days before TV, and I was ignorant of Christianity. I said, "What is a revival? That sounds like fun!"

Although George had been raised in a Christian home, little of it had rubbed off on him. He knew what a revival was and gave every excuse he could think of not to go. Finally, with much urging from Aunt Ettie and me, we ended up in the back of the church pastored by the minister who had married us.

As the singing began, it sounded like an angelic chorus. I had seen Broadway musicals, but I had never heard anything like this. I looked around and the people's faces shone with the glory of God. Rev. Elmer McKay, who was the greatest evangelist I have ever heard, took his little Testament and began proclaiming the oracles of God. I sat spellbound as the power of the Holy Spirit settled over the congregation.

He preached about 10 minutes and came down out of the pulpit. People began rushing to the altar in droves, among them my stalwart new husband. I didn't understand why they were going forward, for there was no invitation but the prodding of the Holy Spirit in many hearts. As I looked at this strange group of people acting in this peculiar way, I raised my head toward heaven and cried out within my soul, "God, make me a real Christian!" God looked down on a poor, haughty, worldly girl and in an instant forgave *all* my sins and made me a new creation. That was 52 years ago, but it's just as real today. I began a marathon for Jesus that night and have tried to run this great race from earth to heaven to the best of my ability. I was born in the fire that night, and the fire is still burning in my soul. □

Ann E. Gaines, wife of elder George A. Gaines, is active in retirement as a writer, Bible class teacher, and correspondent. She assists her husband in a ministry to prisoners on death row in U.S. penitentiaries.



Ann and George Gaines early in their married life.

*I was running
from a life
of sin and
entering into
a new life
that would
change me
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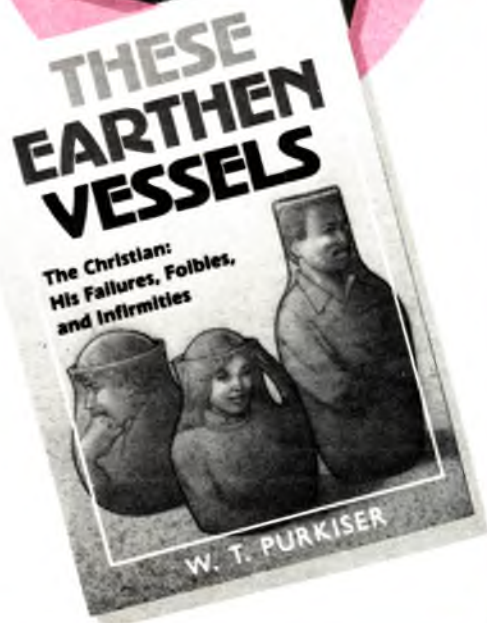
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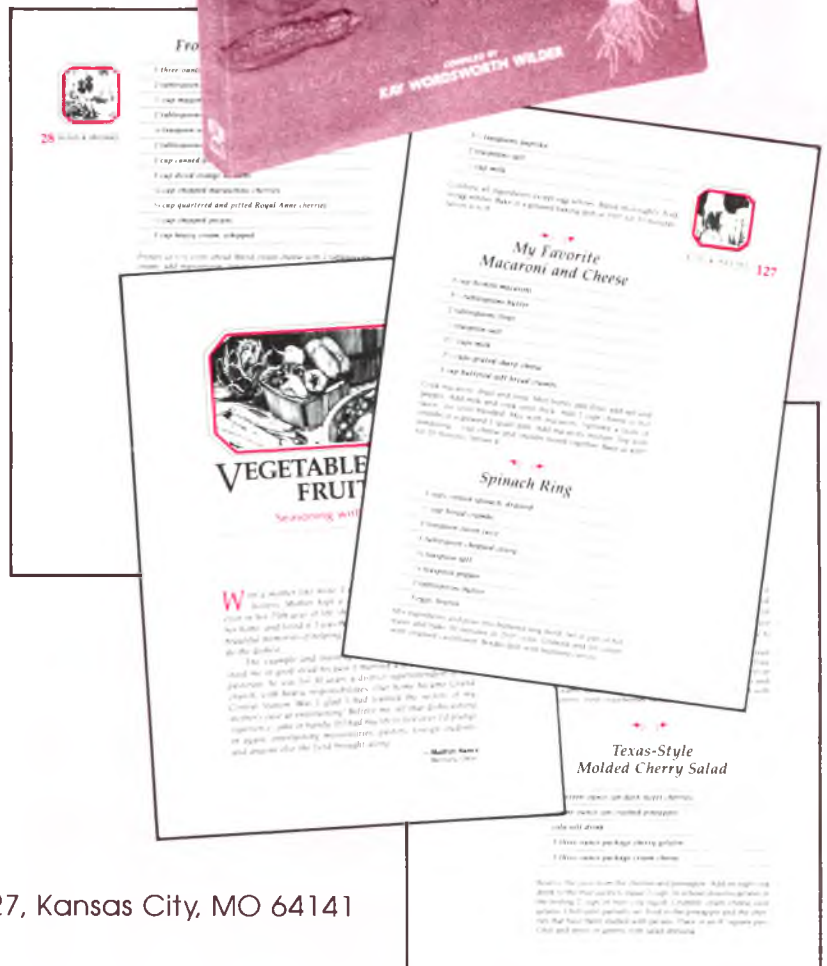
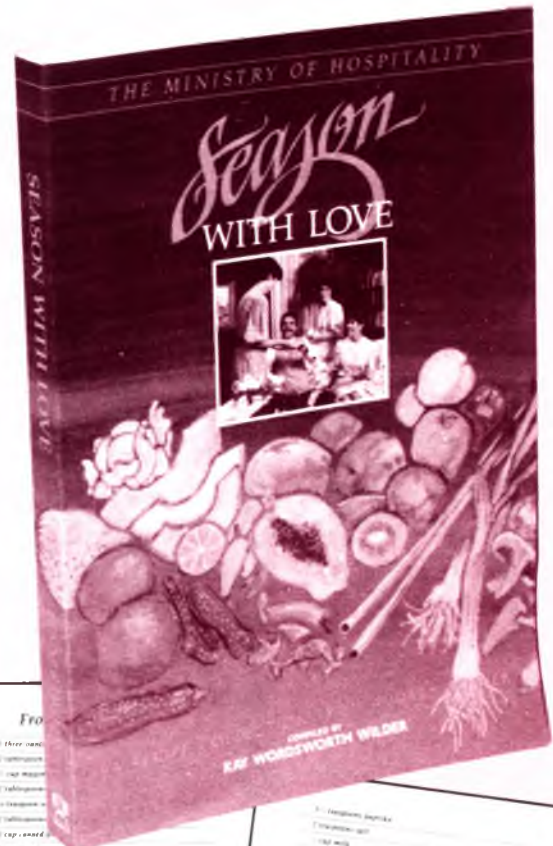
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When a revenue agent "gets religion," it's big news—in the first century or in the twentieth. But crooked "public servants" are not greater sinners than other people; they just get more publicity. The Bible says, "All have sinned," and anyone who issues a personal disclaimer will be utterly unconvincing. All are lost without Jesus Christ, lost in sin, away from God, floundering in the confusing shadows of a spiritual swamp.

Into that swamp came Jesus Christ, the Seeker and Savior, to lead us to God, and, therefore, to freedom, peace, and life. His rescue operation cost His life: "Christ died for our sins." The crucifixion of Christ was God's way of redeeming us from sin. The cross of Christ is a light in the darkness of our swamp, a bridge over the quicksand of our guilt, a pathway to the high ground.

You don't have to be able to analyze light to escape darkness. You don't need an engineering degree to cross a bridge to safety. You can climb a pathway without understanding geology. And you can be saved from sin without a grasp of theology, without profound insights into the person and work of Christ. By doing what that ancient tax collector did, by simply making Jesus welcome and trusting in His words, your life can be transformed.

In this magazine you can read about people who met the Savior and were never the same again. No two of them are alike, but He exactly suits them all. What they did have in common was their lostness—the hunger, defeat, and guilt of sin. What they now have in common is their fellowship with Jesus Christ—the freedom, peace, and joy of being found.

We offer their stories, not wishing you to duplicate their experiences but urging you to trust their Savior. He is the answer to your deepest longings. He is the gateway to your happiest future. In His forgiveness and friendship you will discover the true meaning of human existence. He comes to you that you may come to Him. Where His love intersects your faith, there life is made new and glad, not for a moment but forever.



W. E. McCUMBER, *Editor*